

FIG. 10 is a flowchart showing an example of order processing. It corresponds to the ordering sequence shown in FIG. 4. The processes of the steps in the flowchart of FIG. 10 are carried out as the CPU 1501 executes processes based on the program code stored in the main storage or auxiliary storage of the main server 81.

When the user ID and password is received from the user 4, it is judged in Step S21 whether the user is a registered user and password authentication is performed in Step S22, based on the customer information database. If the user is found to be a registered user and password authentication is successful, it is judged in Step S23 whether there is any illegal information about the user 4. If there is no illegal information, HTML data for the ordering screens is generated in Step S24. Specifically, the list 101 and selection section 102 shown in FIGS. 6 and 9 are generated according to the user ID, and then it is determined which to display, the collection service registration section 104 shown in FIG. 6 or the display section 105 shown in FIG. 9. The HTML data for the ordering screens generated in this way is sent to the user 4 in Step S25.

The processing is terminated in any of the following cases: the user is not a registered user, password authentication fails, and there is illegal information about the user 4.

Now description will be given, with reference to FIG. 17, about the process of determining which display

information to send to the terminal 41, such as the one shown in FIG. 6 or such as the one shown in FIG. 9. The processes of the steps in the flowchart of FIG. 17 are carried out as the CPU 1501 executes processes based on the program code stored in the main storage or auxiliary storage of the main server 81.

In S1701, the main server 81 receives user specific information sent from the terminal 41 via the Internet or the like.

10 In S1702, the main server 81 searches for and retrieves user information according to the received user specific information.

In S1703, the collection flag information contained in the user information is searched for and retrieved. The user information and collection flag are the ones described earlier and stored and managed in the DB 8.

In S1704, the main server 81 judges whether the collection flag information retrieved in S1703 is on or off. If the collection flag information is on, this means that the user has expressed, via the user interface, his/her intention to use the collection service shown in FIG. 6 and that information to this effect has been sent to the main server 81 and is managed there. On the other hand, if the collection flag information is off, this means that the user has not yet expressed his/her intention to use the collection service to the main server 81.

If the answer in S1704 is Yes, display information which corresponds to 105 in FIG. 9 is selected or generated in S1705 as part of the display information to be sent from the main server 81 to the terminal 41.

5 On the other hand, if the answer in S1704 is No, display information which corresponds to 104 in FIG. 6 is selected or generated and decided in S1706 as part of the display information to be sent from the main server 81 to the terminal 41. The information decided on in S1705 or S1706
10 forms part of the display information to be sent to the user's terminal.

A display example different from that in FIG. 6 is shown in FIG. 18. The display example in FIG. 16 allows the user to make more advanced settings when deciding whether to use
15 collection service for each order or each product. This display information is generated by the main server 81, sent to the terminal 41, and displayed there.

In FIG. 18, reference numeral 1801 denotes a display section which corresponds to 104 shown in FIG. 6.
20 Collection flag information is displayed for each product (each item of the consumables) purchased by the user.

The process of generating the information in 1801 will be described by using the flowchart of FIG. 19. The processes of the steps in the flowchart of FIG. 19 are
25 carried out as the CPU 1501 executes processes based on the program code stored in the main storage or auxiliary storage of the main server 81.